



## Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools Program

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ)

### INDOOR AIR QUALITY TOOLS FOR SCHOOLS UPDATE

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#### News and Events

- Interested in learning more about taking action on asthma in your community? If so, register today for EPA's **Communities in Action for Asthma-Friendly Environments** [National Asthma Forum](#) held June 4-5, 2009, in Washington, D.C.
- Did you know May is **Asthma Awareness Month**? Join EPA in the national effort to raise awareness about asthma and its environmental triggers. Check out EPA's Asthma Awareness Month [Event Planning Kit](#) for ideas on hosting educational events at your school. Then, [tell us about your event](#) to receive national recognition for your efforts.
- Is your school in the initial stages of implementing the *IAQ TFS* Program? Has your school made significant progress toward implementing an IAQ program? If so, then for **apply for a Great Start or Leadership Award to get recognition for your investment in school health and facility sustainability**. Applications for these awards are accepted year round, so apply today to demonstrate your commitment to environmental health to your students, staff, and community!

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#### School Maintenance: *Protecting Healthy Buildings, Bodies, and Minds*

When it comes to indoor air quality (IAQ), a lot of attention is often paid to building upgrades and renovations, especially with respect to green design. But those changes to the physical building are just the start: maintenance decisions and ongoing operations of ventilation systems, cleaning protocols, and chemical use can make or break IAQ. So, what can you do to make sure your buildings—and your students and staff—are being maintained for peak performance? Create a comprehensive IAQ maintenance plan.

A maintenance plan isn't a checklist of things to do every week; it's a policy and strategy document that describes the approaches and technical solutions you will employ to ensure your buildings stay healthy. To create an effective, comprehensive maintenance plan, first write down your mission. That is, the purpose and intended outcomes of the policies you set forth. This will help you to focus your plan and set the tone for action for everyone whose actions will affect the plan's implementation. With your mission stated, you are ready to outline how—through policy and strategy—you will approach the technical issue areas at your school. While every district is different, an effective and comprehensive maintenance plan usually includes policies on six technical areas:

- Policies to ensure regular **inspection and maintenance of major building systems**, such as **HVAC systems**, and strategies to keep them functioning optimally, such as a schedule for changing filters;
- Protocols to control and **prevent mold and moisture** and a pre-determined plan for remediating mold if it becomes a problem;
- Procedures to ensure **effective cleaning and maintenance**, such as routine inspections, and a plan for training maintenance staff to keep them informed about your school's policies;
- Policies for **smart materials selection**, including a purchasing policy, that reflect your commitment to using the least-toxic cleaners, paints, and other materials available;
- **Aggressive source control** guidelines, such as an anti-idling policy and a schedule for pollutant-releasing activities that minimizes occupant exposures; and
- A **strong integrated pest management** (IPM) plan that focuses on source control and prevention and reduces as much as possible the use of chemical pesticides; and, a plan for communicating to building occupants and parents when any pesticide use is planned.

The final step is to communicate with all school stakeholders about the maintenance plan so they know

why it's important, how to use it, and what to expect from it. This includes the purchasing department, maintenance, teachers, and parents. Give everyone a chance to read, understand, and get on board with the plan.

For more information on how to design a good IAQ maintenance plan, read the [Building and Grounds Maintenance Background](#) and review the [Checklist](#) included in the [IAQ TFS Action Kit](#)

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### Insight into Excellence: Newark Public Schools, 2008 Excellence Award

What makes Newark Public Schools excellent? Open communication, across-the-board staff training, and innovative use of technology. Newark Public Schools began by partnering with the Pediatric/Adult Asthma Coalition of New Jersey (PACNJ) to hold special training sessions about IAQ and how the *IAQ TFS* Program would be implemented at all levels in the district to improve school health and contribute to better asthma outcomes for students. Once the staff was on board, the district worked with each school to develop an individualized IAQ plan that fit its unique needs. The district used technology to streamline their operations and facilitate day-to-day implementation, including an interactive work order system and online command center. These Web-based enhancements unified the individual school programs, reduced response times, prevented IAQ issues, and allowed IAQ teams to quickly address issues when they arose. Even more importantly, the technological innovations opened up dialogue among all of the district's IAQ teams and created a feedback loop for successful strategies, policies, and actions. For its innovative work, the district received EPA's 2008 [National Excellence Award](#), one of EPA's highest honors for IAQ management.

What makes your school IAQ management program excellent? Apply for the National Excellence or National Model of Sustained Excellence award to be recognized for it. Details for the 2009 application period are coming soon; check out the [Awards Web site](#) to find out more.

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### C.L.E.A.N.® Award Recognizes Custodians for Role in School Health

The national Custodial Leaders for Environmental Advocacy Nationwide Award—the C.L.E.A.N. Award—recognizes the important contributions that custodians make to public health in their schools, communities, and their profession. The annual award will recognize one top recipient and four runners-up, all of whom receive a cash award, an all-expense-paid trip to the National Education Association (NEA) National ESP Conference to receive the award, and one year's worth of membership dues to the NEA. The top recipient will also receive product donations and supplies and a school celebration on National C.L.E.A.N. Day.

To learn more about the award and how you or someone you know can apply, visit the [C.L.E.A.N. Award Web page](#). Guidelines for the 2010 C.L.E.A.N. Award and the application deadline will be available this Fall.

*The National C.L.E.A.N. Award is a joint initiative of the National Education Association (NEA), the NEA Health Information Network (NEA HIN), the Soap and Detergent Association (SDA), and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).*

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Pat Nicholson,  
2009 Grand Prize Winner  
Brownsville Elementary, Bremerton,  
WA  
*Photo: Rick Ballesteros*

### Healthy Schools Network Sponsors National Healthy Schools Day

Indoor air quality in schools is gaining more attention every day, and the time for action is now. **On Monday, April 27, 2009, and throughout the week celebrate National Healthy Schools Day with an activity or event that promotes indoor air quality in your schools.** National Healthy Schools Day is the first day of the Council of Educational Facility Planner's International *School Building Week*, April 27 – May 1, 2009.

See the **new Planning Guide** on the Healthy Schools Network's Web site at [www.NationalHealthySchoolsDay.org](http://www.NationalHealthySchoolsDay.org). The planning guide has suggested local activities and events you can set up to get involved and bring much needed attention to IAQ. Make it your own activity or event: you choose; you plan; you organize. Healthy Schools Network will help!

National Healthy Schools Day is fast approaching. The time to plan your event is *today*!

**Don't forget to register your event online at: [www.nationalhealthyschoolsday.org/tell\\_us\\_form.php](http://www.nationalhealthyschoolsday.org/tell_us_form.php).**

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## Have Your Questions Answered!

Is there a topic you want to see covered in an *IAQ TFS* Update? Need more information or have a quick question? Do you have suggestions for a Webinar, an Update feature, or are simply curious about an IAQ topic and would like more information? If so, send us an e-mail at [IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com](mailto:IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com).

**Share YOUR news and events!** Send us information to share with the school IAQ community. It could be featured in the next Update. E-mail your news to [IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com](mailto:IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com).

If you like what you're reading, maybe a friend or colleague would too—forward this e-mail! To subscribe to *IAQ TFS* Updates, send an e-mail to [IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com](mailto:IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com) with "subscribe" in the subject line.

The *IAQ TFS* Program is a comprehensive resource to help schools maintain a healthy environment in school buildings by identifying, correcting, and preventing IAQ problems. Learn more about the *IAQ TFS* Program at [www.epa.gov/iaq/schools](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools).

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